

IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A wafer polishing method using a polishing apparatus which comprises a rotatable table having a polishing cloth adhered thereon and a polishing head equipped with a wafer holding plate opposing to the table and in which the back surface of the wafer is held by a holding surface of the wafer holding plate and the front surface of the wafer is pressed to into contact with and polished by the polishing pad, comprising a polishing step of polishing the front surface of the wafer to a predetermined total polishing stock removal without changing the polishing apparatus, wherein the polishing step is divided into plural sub-steps and a holding position of the wafer in a subsequent sub-step is different from a holding position of the wafer in a previous sub-step and wherein the wafer and the polishing pad are separated from contact with one another between the plural sub-steps.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The A~~ wafer polishing method according to claim 1 using a polishing apparatus which comprises a rotatable table having a polishing cloth adhered thereon and a polishing head equipped with a wafer holding plate opposing to the table and in which the back surface of the wafer is held by a holding surface of the wafer holding plate and the front surface of the wafer is pressed to and polished by the polishing pad, comprising a polishing step of polishing the front surface of the wafer to a predetermined total polishing stock removal without changing the polishing apparatus, wherein the polishing step is divided into plural sub-steps and a holding position of the wafer in a subsequent sub-step is different from a holding position of the wafer in a previous sub-step, wherein the change of the wafer holding position is performed by rotating a holding position of the wafer about the center thereof as the center of rotation by a predetermined rotational angle and the predetermined rotational angle is set to an angle obtained by dividing outer peripheral waviness of the wafer by the number (n) of the sub-steps.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ A wafer polishing method according to ~~claim 1~~ using a polishing apparatus which comprises a rotatable table having a polishing cloth adhered thereon and a polishing head equipped with a wafer holding plate opposing to the table and in which the back surface of the wafer is held by a holding surface of the wafer holding plate and the front surface of the wafer is pressed to and polished by the polishing pad, comprising a polishing step of polishing the front surface of the wafer to a predetermined total polishing stock removal without changing the polishing apparatus, wherein the polishing step is divided into plural sub-steps and a holding position of the wafer in a subsequent sub-step is different from a holding position of the wafer in a previous sub-step, wherein the change of a wafer holding position is performed by rotating a holding position of the wafer about the center thereof as the center of rotation by a predetermined rotational angle and the predetermined rotational angle is set to 1/2 of outer peripheral waviness of the wafer.

4. (Previously Presented) The wafer polishing method according to claim 1, wherein a polishing stock removal in each sub-step is set to a value obtained by dividing the total polishing stock removal by the number (n) of the sub-steps.

5. (Previously Presented) The wafer polishing method according to claim 1, wherein the wafer is an SOI wafer.

6. - 8. (Canceled)